



Daily Highlights

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- * United Nations and NATO say Bosnian Serbs have withdrawn heavy weapons from Sarajevo exclusion zone and resumption of air strikes is currently not necessary.
- * General Committee recommends 167-item agenda for fiftieth session of General Assembly; rejects item on Republic of China on Taiwan in international context.
- * General Assembly President says United Nations should make itself better known for work in fields of development, humanitarian assistance and international law.
- * UNCTAD to hold high-level meeting at Headquarters from 26 September to 6 October to discuss how to improve living standards in least developed countries.
- * Somali faction releases seven international aid workers detained in Baidoa; negotiations continue for release of remaining 14 detainees.

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The Bosnian Serbs have withdrawn defined heavy weapons from the Sarajevo exclusion zone and the resumption of air strikes is currently not necessary, according to Lieutenant-General Bernard Janvier, United Nations Force Commander, and Admiral Leighton Smith of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In a joint statement issued last night, they noted that Sarajevo airport remained open and that United Nations and humanitarian traffic had unimpeded access to the city.

General Janvier and Admiral Smith said the Bosnian Serbs had expressed their willingness to discuss a cessation of hostilities agreement at any time. They urged all parties to join the Serbs and finalize a cessation of hostilities agreement for the Sarajevo Area with the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), with a view to extending it to a complete and country-wide cessation of hostilities at the earliest opportunity. They warned that any

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subsequent attack on Sarajevo or any other safe area, or other non-compliance with the exclusion zone, could lead to the resumption of air strikes.

A United Nations spokesman today announced that the Bosnian Serbs had withdrawn or destroyed some 250 heavy weapons from around Sarajevo, including four anti-aircraft weapons. He expressed concern that the number of firing incidents in the city had increased for the third day in a row yesterday, albeit to a historically low 237. Meanwhile, the situation was reported to have stabilized in western Bosnia. However, restrictions on movement and poor weather made it difficult for the United Nations to confirm that offensive operations had halted in the area.

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The General Committee has recommended that the fiftieth General Assembly adopt an agenda of 167 items. Among the new items recommended for inclusion were the report of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, multilingualism, Universal Congress on the Panama Canal, and strengthening of the United Nations system. Recommendations on the inclusion of agenda items and their allocation to the Assembly's six Main Committees were made during a review of the Secretary-General's memorandum on the Organization of work for the session.

The Committee did not recommend that the Assembly consider the "exceptional situation of the Republic of China on Taiwan in the international context, based on the principle of universality and in accordance with the established model of parallel representation of divided countries at the United Nations" as proposed by several States. In a long debate, many speakers supported the initiative, stating that the 21 million people of Taiwan were not represented at the United Nations, in violation of the principle of neutrality. However, numerous speakers opposed the initiative, saying that it violated the sovereignty and territorial integrity of China.

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While reform of the United Nations is a vital undertaking, the Organization deserves more credit for its successes in many fields, according to General Assembly President Diogo Freitas do Amaral (Portugal). He told correspondents at Headquarters that some people focused only on issues of war and peace. The United Nations should thus make itself better known for its work in the fields of development, economic and social welfare, humanitarian assistance and international law. World public opinion should know about the tremendous and positive work of specialized agencies and bodies.

The President expressed the hope that the General Assembly's new working group to review proposals to revitalize, strengthen and reform the United Nations system would have a blueprint for action by the end of the fiftieth session. He stressed that he wanted to be a reformer President, not a mere

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ceremonial one, and to help transform the United Nations of the twentieth century into the United Nations of the twenty-first century.

As the only body which represented all Member States, the General Assembly should have a closer relationship with the Security Council, he went on to say. To that end, there should be a direct, permanent dialogue between the Presidents of the Assembly and the Council. The Assembly President should be well informed about everything that went on in the Council, he added.

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Ministers and senior officials from developed and developing countries will meet at Headquarters from 26 September to 6 October to discuss ways of improving the living standards of the one-tenth of the world's population in the least developed countries. The high-level intergovernmental meeting will undertake a Mid-term Global Review of the Implementation of the Programme of Action for those countries for the 1990s, which was adopted at the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in Paris in September 1990. It will also identify concrete national and international actions to accelerate implementation of the Programme.

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) currently identifies 48 countries as least developed, of which 33 are in Africa. Their combined population is estimated at 560 million. They had an average per capita income of \$300 in 1993, compared to \$900 in the developing world as a whole and \$21,600 in the developed market economies. The Programme of Action aimed at arresting the deterioration in socio-economic conditions in the poorest countries, and setting them on the path of sustained growth and development through a series of national and international actions.

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General Mohamed Farah Aideed's forces have released seven women from among the 21 international aid workers held captive in Baidoa, Somalia, since earlier in the week. The seven -- two United Nations staff members and five non-government organization employees -- were flown out of the country yesterday. Negotiations are under way for the release of the remaining 14 workers, ten of whom are United Nations staff members.

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